



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

This policy is reviewed annually.

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*In addition to the information set out in this policy, and for instant online access to current governmental updates, procedures and regulations, please see the **Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership Manual** : gloucestershirescp.trixonline.co.uk*

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 At The Quay we are committed to creating and maintaining a safe and secure environment for learners, staff, and visitors, and to promoting a climate where children, young people and adults will feel confident sharing any concerns they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.

1.2 This policy and the procedure it outlines have been developed in accordance with the following statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures:

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023: A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children, December 2023: Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2025 www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

1.3 Other ATS policies and procedures which should be read alongside this policy are as follows:

ATS Anti-Bullying Policy

ATS Behaviour Management Policy

ATS Complaints Procedure

ATS Data Protection Policy

ATS Health and Safety Policy

ATS Lone Working Policy

ATS Online Safety and IT Policy

ATS Personal Care Policy

ATS Privacy Statement

ATS Recruitment and Selection Policy

ATS Staff Code of Conduct

ATS Visitors Safeguarding

ATS Whistleblowing Policy

These policies can be accessed at the All Things SEN: The Quay website.

1.4 This policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the DSL to ensure compliance with the safeguarding requirements of the placing Authorities, to follow local Safeguarding Partnership policies and procedures, and to reflect any change within the organisation. Staff are updated on any changes as part of their annual Safeguarding training.

1.5 We recognise the vital contribution our provision can make in safeguarding children and young people from harm, and intend to carry out our responsibilities actively and enthusiastically in liaison with all other concerned parties.

Concerned parents/primary guardians/carers may also contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Dean Frances-Hawksley (dean@allthingssen.co.uk, tel: 0795 0888193) or Deputy DSL Steven Lane (steven@allthingssen.co.uk) in his absence.

1.6 We recognise the need for all to be alert to the risks posed by those who may wish to harm children and young people at The Quay and maintain an attitude that “it could happen here” where safeguarding is concerned.

1.7 The four main elements of this policy are:

- i) Striving to prevent harm through the development of a positive ethos, a safe provision environment, a curriculum that includes SMSC, and through the offer of pastoral support to learners and their families;
- ii) The provision’s child protection infrastructure and procedures for identifying and reporting cases (or suspected cases) of abuse or other child protection/safeguarding concerns;
- iii) Support for learners who may have suffered significant harm, and their families; and
- iv) Staff recruitment, management and support systems which protect children and young people.

2. AIMS OF THE POLICY

- i) To support the development of the whole child as an individual by promoting security, confidence and independence (throughout this policy the term ‘learner’ will be used to refer to anyone under the age of 18 years old).

- ii) Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children and young people's welfare
- iii) To raise awareness of all staff as to their statutory responsibilities in safeguarding including identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- iv) To ensure that staff concerned with children and young people are aware of their role and responsibility in safeguarding these pupils and young people as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- v) To ensure that all staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues
- vi) To use a clear system of monitoring children and young people who are known to be or considered to be at risk of harm;
- vii) To ensure that there is good, appropriate and effective communication between all members of staff;
- viii) To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially Social Care and relevant schools;
- ix) To ensure all adults working within The Quay with access to children and young people undergo all relevant checks e.g. enhanced DBS check as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- x) To ensure all staff are clear about the 'Paramountcy Principle'; that the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL

The DSL in All Things SEN – The Quay is Dean Frances-Hawksley (dean@allthingssen.co.uk). In his absence, safeguarding matters arising will be dealt with by the Deputy DSL Steven Lane (steven@allthingssen.co.uk).

The DSL is responsible for:

- Ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to safeguarding and child protection issues
- Taking the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) within our provision, as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025
- Ensuring that the DSL of the school or college at which the learner is enrolled is kept updated of all concerns and supported in whatever way possible to ensure all relevant information is shared
- Ensuring that he works closely with the deputy DSL so that they can act effectively in the absence of the DSL;

- Ensuring that the relevant safeguarding and child protection information is shared with staff on induction – part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025 (and a copy of Annex B to all staff who work directly with children), as well as The Quay's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy - and that the role of the DSL and Deputy DSL are clearly defined and explained.
- Ensuring that staff are appropriately trained, that training is refreshed annually, supplemented by regular safeguarding updates; ensuring that all training is mapped and recorded when completed for all staff
- Ensuring all processes relating to Safer Recruitment in Education are maintained and remain effective
- Adhering to SGCP procedures by referring children and young people to the Access and Response Team (ART) on 01454 866000 or relevant Multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) of the placing local authority if there are concerns about their safety or well-being;
- Liaising with the Designated Officer of the placing authority in accordance with statutory guidance
- Ensuring that in the case of a referral to ART/ MASH (or any social care 'front door' in other Local Authorities), the parents/carers are informed prior to the referral being made, unless doing so would put the child or young person at risk of further harm;
- Ensuring that written records are kept about any child or young person about whom there are concerns of possible abuse or neglect. Abuse will be defined in terms of: Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse, (including witnessing or hearing domestic abuse) and Neglect.
- Storing any paper records confidentially in a secure locked cabinet
- Checking the attendance of learners subject to a child protection plan, notifying the relevant social care team if there is an unexplained absence of a learner subject to a child protection plan of more than a day without contact and good reason;
- Submitting written reports to Social Care on request within the agreed time limits;
- Liaising with other agencies to safeguard children and young people;
- Notifying parents/primary guardians/ carers as soon as possible if a learner sustains an injury or are affected by an incident whilst they are the responsibility of the Quay
- Ensuring that a paper copy of all child protection records, or an electronic copy is securely sent/forwarded to a child or young person's new school following a transfer;
- Retaining copies of all child protection files including those for children or young people no longer on roll until the child or young person reaches 25 years of age;
- Ensuring that the Single Central Record is maintained as an up to date and accurate record (see Appendix 2.0 for further details).
- Updating staff on any changes to safeguarding legislation and procedures and relevant learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) in line

with Working Together 2023. These updates will occur annually or more frequently when necessary and will include safeguarding and child protection updates.

- Ensuring the provision has ICT filtering and monitoring processes in place on its ICT network that prevents harmful or inappropriate online content from being accessed whilst enabling the monitoring of online activity that has been blocked by the ICT filter.
- Ensuring all matters relating to child protection are kept confidential. Information about a child or young person will only be disclosed to members of staff on a need-to-know basis, in line with 'information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers' 2018 (see Appendix 2.1- 2.3 for further details);
- Ensuring all staff are aware of their professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and young people;
- Ensuring all members of staff recognise that statistically children and young people with SEN and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse.
- Ensuring all members of staff receive whole setting Child Protection training every 3 years which covers:

- their personal responsibilities in relation to child protection;
- school child protection procedures;
- identifying signs of abuse/suspected abuse;
- how to support a child, young person or adult who discloses abuse;
- current national and local issues in safeguarding and child protection;
- whistleblowing and the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO); and
- relevant legislation related to child protection

N.B. Further information about the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead can be found in Annex C of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

The DSL and deputy will also:

- Liaise with Local Authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search

3.2 Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility. Our policy and procedures also apply to home and off-site activities. It must be noted, however, that

as per KCSIE 2025 guidance on Alternative Learning Provisions the overall responsibility for safeguarding of pupils who are on roll at local schools and colleges falls to the DSL of that organization. Although ultimate responsibility lies with the DSL of the school where the learner is on role, this in no way negates the responsibility of the DSL at The Quay to follow all procedures specified in this policy.

3.3 All staff members will know how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, how to respond to learners who disclose abuse and what to do if they are concerned about a child.

3.4 As a provision we will ensure that:

- the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is trained to an advanced level by attending Advanced Inter-agency Child Protection training and maintained by attending CP Update training every 2 years thereafter.
- The DSL meets the same training requirements as the DSL outlined above;
- Entry to The Quay premises is monitored and controlled by gates, doors and the vigilance of staff, and that authorised visitors to the school will be logged into and out of the premises and follow the visitors' safeguarding procedures.
- The DSL and deputy will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:
 - Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
 - Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
 - Contribute to the assessment of children
 - Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
 - Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour

4. SUPPORTING CHILDREN

4.1. Our provision will support all learners by:

- ensuring the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning through PSHE, RSHE and other curriculum contexts and ensuring that learners are taught about safeguarding so that they 'recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it'.
- encouraging learners to talk about feelings and ensuring all staff are receptive to any such self-expression, be it verbal or non-verbal.
- supporting children to feel safe, develop confidence and independence and increase the development of self-esteem and self-assertiveness and responding to concerns of aggression or bullying.
- Ensuring children and young people know that there are adults in The Quay who they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;

- liaising and working together with other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding children, including Early Help and preventative services as required in Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023
- considering intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings.
- having a behaviour policy that is aimed at supporting vulnerable learners where learning difficulties may also contribute to reduced understanding of acceptable behaviours.
- having clear procedures in place for addressing and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse, including harmful sexual behaviours, sexual violence, and sexual harassment.
- acknowledging the importance of 'contextual safeguarding', <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/> which considers wider environmental factors in a learner's life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare.
- acknowledging that a child that is looked after (CWCF), in kinship care or has been previously looked after by the Local Authority potentially remains vulnerable and ensuring that all staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to support these children.
- taking positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with disadvantages affecting learners with certain protected characteristics in order to meet their specific need. For example, taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence that they were being subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment. This includes making reasonable adjustments for children identified as having special educational needs.
- acknowledging that a child or young person being lesbian, gay or bisexual can sometimes be targeted by other children.
- being aware that where a school places a pupil with The Quay, it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs. The school will follow DfE guidance on Alternative Educational Provision:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision>
- Including in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip children and young people with the skills they need to stay safe. These are mainly embedded throughout the formal and informal provision curriculum and include:
 - E-safety (including misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories)
 - Healthy relationships
 - Consent
 - Recognising and dealing with peer pressure
 - Safe and unsafe touch
 - Skills to express their views and complain purposefully
 - How to assess risk and make choices to keep themselves safe

➤ Independent living / self-care skills

Opportunities to teach these areas are provided through structured programmes of work including Sex and Relationships Education (SRE), Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and are also reflected in the learners' day to day experiences through the mission and values of the provision.

4.2 Equality Statement: some children and young people have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children and young people with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children and young people's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children and young people have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

4.3 We recognise that developing the necessary qualities (e.g. emotional resilience, self-confidence, the ability to reflect and express inner emotional states) within learners and across the provision as a whole can help to prevent harm.

4.4 Early Help

Keeping Children Safe in Education states that "All staff should be prepared to identify children and young people who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child [or young person's] life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years" (p.7). Staff should discuss early help requirements with the DSL (or deputy). Engagement with EHAP is voluntary, and therefore families will be asked prior to engaging in the EHAP process. We follow the Gloucestershire early help process which includes the use of the Early Help Assessment & Plan (EHAP). It may be appropriate for a member of Quay staff to initiate an EHAP and take on the role of Lead Professional, or become a member of a Team around the Child/Family (TAC/F) as part of the EHAP process.

All staff should have an understanding of the EHAP process and how they can contribute to it as and when appropriate.

For an online MARF referral (to Children's Social Care and Early Help):

https://forms.gloucestershire.gov.uk/RequestSupport_Childrens_EarlyHelp

5. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH A CONCERN AND RECORD KEEPING

(See also Appendix A2.1 Responding to Concerns of Abuse, and A2.5 Low-Level Concerns)

5.1 Concerns that staff must immediately report.

It is not the responsibility of the school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All members of staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind. Accordingly, all concerns regarding the welfare of pupils will be recorded and discussed with the

designated safeguarding lead (or the deputy DSL in the absence of the DSL) prior to any discussion with parents.

Concerns that staff must immediately report:

- any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play;
- any explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious;
- any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm (e.g. worrying drawings or play);
- any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment;
- any concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect;
- any significant changes in a child's presentation, including non-attendance;
- any hint or disclosure of abuse from any person;
- any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. living in a household with children present);
- any potential indicators of Child Exploitation (CE);
- any potential indicators of FGM;
- any potential indicators of Radicalisation;
- any potential indicators of living in a household with Domestic Abuse

5.2 Responding to Disclosure

Disclosures or information may be received from learners, parents or other members of the public. The school recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly, all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity. Where children have communication difficulties, adults will make adjustments as per their individual communication plan to support in communicating their concerns. This may include using a known adult, social stories or art therapy.

Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the designated safeguarding lead and make a contemporaneous record.

Principles:

Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the designated safeguarding lead in order that he can make an informed decision of what to do next.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Child protection processes will operate with the best interests of the child at their core.

Staff will:

- listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child may be at risk of harm;
- try to ensure that the person disclosing does not have to speak to another member of school staff;
- clarify the information;
- try to keep questions to a minimum and of an 'open' nature e.g. using TED technique – 'Tell me, Explain to me, Describe to me....';
- try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise;
- not express feelings or judgements regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child;
- explain sensitively to the person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the designated safeguarding lead. Children need to know that staff may not be able to uphold confidentiality where there are concerns about their safety or someone else's;
- reassure and support the child as far as possible;
- explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told;
- explain what will happen next and who will be involved as appropriate;
- make an accurate factual record as soon as possible including details of:
 - Dates and times of their observations/incident
 - Dates and times of any discussions in which they were involved
 - Any injuries
 - Explanations given by the child/adult
 - What action was taken
 - Any actual words or phrases used by the child

The record must be added to the Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form on Sharepoint: Safeguarding dated by the author.

5.3 Action by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy DSL in their absence)

The DSL must then be directly informed in order to determine an appropriate time scale for further action (ie. whether the concern requires emergency action or is a lower level concern). The DSL will automatically receive an electronic copy of the report which will be reviewed the same day and any further actions noted. Any further actions or investigations will be carried out at the soonest possible opportunity. The DSL will inform the DSL of the school at which the learner is on roll (and who remains ultimately responsible for safeguarding concerns), forward the report, and, where meeting a sufficient threshold, contact the LADO. All actions will be recorded on the same safeguarding form as the original concern.

Following any information raising a concern, the designated safeguarding lead will consider:

- any urgent medical needs of the child;
- whether the child is subject to a child protection plan;
- discussing the matter with other agencies involved with the family;

- consulting with appropriate professionals known to the child e.g. Early Help Service Manager, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), medical professional working with the child and/or Safeguarding Advisor for Education;
- the child's wishes.

Then decide (where appropriate, in conjunction with the DSL at the school where the learner is on roll):

- to talk to parents, unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant harm, impede any police investigation and/or place the member of staff or others at risk;
- whether to make a child protection referral to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately;

OR

- not to make a referral at this stage;
- if further monitoring is necessary;
- if it would be appropriate to undertake an assessment (e.g. Early Help assessment) and/or make a referral to the Early Intervention Panel and/or to other services.

All referrals will always be kept on file irrespective of the outcome.

If the DSL is of the view that concerns are not being responded to appropriately then these concerns will be escalated until the DSL feels that some resolution has been achieved. Initial escalation would be to the appropriate Practice or Team Manager, however, may also involve escalation to the appropriate Service Manager if it is felt necessary to do so.

In the absence of the DSL or DDSL, staff will refer directly to the DSL at the learner's school, or, where a learner is not on role at a school, to a MASH or the child's social worker (if applicable) and the police if there is a significant concern.

5.4. Safeguarding records are kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), which place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. The Quay is registered with the ICO and follows the ICO guidance 'For Organisations' including protecting personal information and providing access to official information.

Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them. Safeguarding records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse will be retained for any Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry.

If a child or young person for whom The Quay has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to a permanent school placement, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, and separately from the main

pupil file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child or young person.

6. CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS ABOUT STAFF

(See also Appendix A2.4 Allegations Against Staff, A2.3 Code of Good Practice)

6.1. All staff understand the processes and procedures to manage any safeguarding concern or allegation (no matter how small) about staff members.

6.2. If staff have a safeguarding concern, or an allegation of harming or posing a risk of harm to children is made about another member of staff, then this should immediately be referred to the DSL.

6.3 Where concerns are raised about a member of staff, the DSL will:

- Assess the situation in terms of any immediate or ongoing risks and take appropriate action in conjunction with the Joint Director.
- Conduct relevant interviews and fact-finding investigations at the soonest possible opportunity to establish the fullest picture
- Where a particular learner is involved in the allegation, contact the DSL in the school where the learner is on roll, sharing all information and relevant reports.
- Complete an advice request form and send to the LADO.
<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children-young-people-and-families/lado-allegations/>
- Follow up on all advice given, including giving extra training where necessary and instigating disciplinary procedures where necessary

6.4 Where there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff to the DSL or Deputy DSLs, report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO). In Gloucestershire the LADO is Nigel Hatten, who is supported by Tracy Brooks and Jenny Kadodia, the Allegations Management Co-Ordinators (amadmin@gloucestershire.gov.uk - or telephone 01452 426994. The LADO for Bristol can be contacted at LADO@bristol.gov.uk, tel: 01179037795, or through a LADO referral form at <https://bristolsafeguarding.org/children/lado-concerns-about-professionals>

6.5 Where the allegation is against, or the concern is about, the Quay Directors, the LADO must be informed immediately.

6.6 Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff. Other complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the school's complaint policy and procedures.

6.7 If you would prefer to raise your concerns outside of The Quay then you are able to contact the NSPCC whistleblowing line on 0800 028 0285 or email help@nspcc.org.uk. See also ATS Whistleblowing Policy.

6.8 Staff Code of Conduct

All staff are expected to adhere to the provision's Code of Conduct in respect of their contact with pupils and young people and their families. Children and young people will be treated with respect and dignity and no punishment, restraint, sanctions or rewards are allowed outside those detailed in the school's Promoting Positive Behaviour in Quay policy.

Whilst it would be unrealistic to prohibit all physical contact between adults, children and young people, staff are expected to exercise caution and avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism and misrepresentation. If it becomes necessary to hold a learner physically for their own or others' safety, this should be in line with The Quay's policy for physical intervention (Promoting Positive Behaviour in School policy), a record will be made of the incident and the DSL informed on the same day. (See Appendix 2.3 for further details)

For their own safety and protection, staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with pupils and young people. All rooms which are used for the teaching or counselling of pupils and young people should have clear glass panels in the doors or the doors will be left open.

School staff should also be alert to the possible risks which might arise from contact with pupils and young people and parents/carers outside the school including the use of social media.

Please refer to the ATS Online Safety Policy, ATS Staff Code of Conduct, ATS Lone Working Policy, ATS Personal Care Policy.

7. Allegations against Other Children and Young People

(See also Appendix A1.1 Abuse Definitions and A1.4 Further Information on Specific Safeguarding Issues)

7.1 Allegations of abuse or other safeguarding concerns may be made against other pupils and young people within our setting. These may include allegations of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

7.2 It may also be considered a safeguarding issue if the allegation:

- Is being made against an older learner and refers to their behaviour towards a younger or more vulnerable learner;
- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offense;
- Puts other learners at risk, or raises the risk factor for others;

- Indicates that other learners may have been harmed or be at risk of harm; and
- Includes bullying (under the definition of emotional abuse) or intimidation.

7.3 Specific safeguarding issues against another child or young person may include:

- Physical abuse:
 - Pre-planned violence
 - Physical altercations
 - Hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or some other form of physical harm
 - Forcing others to carry out violence
 - Forcing others to use drugs, alcohol or other substances
 - Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Emotional abuse:
 - Bullying
 - Threats and intimidation
 - Blackmail/extortion
- Sexual abuse & sexual harassment:
 - Sexual violence e.g. rape, assault by penetration
 - Sexual harassment e.g. sexual comments, sexual taunting, sexualised online bullying
 - Indecent exposure
 - Indecent touching
 - Showing pornography to others
 - Forcing others to create/share/download indecent images
 - Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
 - Sexting (see 'Sexting in Schools and Colleges', 2016), also known as youth produced sexual
 - imagery); also (see Appendix 1.4 for further details)
- Sexual exploitation
 - Encouraging/enticing other pupils and young people to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour
 - Photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts
 - Sharing images through social media

7.4 When an allegation of a safeguarding nature is made by a learner against another learner:

- it should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) as soon as possible (or deputy if the DSL is unavailable);
- A factual record must be kept (as per normal safeguarding child protection procedures) and updated with all actions and outcomes – the Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form is located on Sharepoint;

- The incident should not be investigated at this time. The DSL (or deputy) will contact the Access and Response Team (ART) or local authority MASH team to discuss the case, as well as contacting the DSL of the school where all involved parties are on roll, and make a formal referral where appropriate;
- If the allegation indicates that a potential crime has taken place, ART or local authority MASH team will refer the case to the police;
- Parents/ Primary guardians/ carers of both the alleged victim and the learner the allegation is against should be informed; this should be discussed with the DSL of the school where the relevant parties are on roll, as well as during consultation with ART/MASH;
- A risk assessment will be considered at this time to protect all parties involved;
- It may be appropriate, for a fixed period of time, to exclude the learner against whom the allegation has been made in line with our provision's Promoting Positive Behaviour policy and procedures – this will be discussed with the DSL of the school where the learner is on roll;
- Police and social care will lead any investigation. However, where neither police nor social care thresholds are met, The Quay will then undertake a thorough investigation following our provision's policies and procedures, ensuring the DSLs of the learners' schools are involved in all decision making;
- A risk assessment should be considered along with an appropriate supervision plan;
- Support should be given to all learners involved (including those against whom the allegation has been made), and they should be in attendance at all relevant meetings and sign and agree to the plan that is set; and
- The plan should be monitored and review dates set.

7.5 A child or young person abusing another child or young person may be indicative of that child/ young person being a victim of abuse themselves, or other issues that require an appropriate and co-ordinated response (e.g. carrying out an early help assessment). It is important to remember that, as a child/ young person, any alleged perpetrator is entitled to, deserving of, and should be provided with, the appropriate level of support to help them understand and overcome the reasons for their behaviour and help protect other children and young people by limiting the likelihood of them abusing again;

7.6 Support should be offered on a case-by-case basis and in consultation with the pupils and young people involved, parents/ primary guardians/carers and any relevant agencies;

7.7 The wishes and feelings of those involved should be taken into account e.g. the victim should be asked if there is a trusted adult within the school environment they wish to talk to as an ongoing source of support, or the victim may express a need to leave a classroom which will need to be supported and facilitated.

7.8 Police Action and Responsibility

Avon and Somerset Police will make an assessment on a case-by-case basis as to the legality, proportionality and necessity to share information with partner agencies, including APs. Where a report is made concerning a school-age child or a young person, and the AP is already involved, the police should keep the DSL for that setting updated with developments in the case and police officer/staff dealing with the matter.

Where a report is made concerning a school-age child or a young person and the provision is not already involved, the police must always give active consideration to sharing relevant information with the setting. This will ensure that the setting can take necessary measures to ensure the safety of the children/ young people involved and others they may come into contact with. The decision on the appropriate measures to take should be made by the setting with support from the police as necessary.

In the case of police or court bail conditions for safeguarding cases, the police must notify the setting of the conditions which are relevant to keep the child/ young person and others safe in the setting. If a report indicates a safeguarding concern regarding a child or a risk they may pose to others, the presumption is the report will be shared with those who need to know to help keep children and young people safe. A review strategy meeting may be the most appropriate way of communicating and agreeing a suitable course of action.

8. INFORMATION SHARING

8.1. We recognise that all matters relating to safeguarding are confidential.

8.2. All staff members have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children.

8.3. All staff members who come into contact with children will be given appropriate training to understand the purpose of information sharing to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

8.4. We will ensure that staff members are confident about what they can and should do according to the law, including how to obtain consent to share information and when information can be shared without consent.

8.5. Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will act to share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

See also: ATS Data Protection Policy and ATS Privacy Statement

9. SAFER RECRUITMENT

(See also Appendix A2.0 Safer Recruitment Checks, and ATS Recruitment and Selection Policy)

- 9.1. The Quay is committed to ensuring the development of a safe culture and that all steps are taken to recruit only those individuals who are safe to work with our learners and staff.
- 9.2. The Joint Directors are responsible for ensuring that The Quay follows safer recruitment processes as per the training guidance.
- 9.3. The Quay maintains an accurate Single Central Record (SCR) in line with statutory guidance. This will be monitored and reviewed to ensure compliance by the Joint Directors.
- 9.4. The Joint Directors are responsible for staff recruitment. Both have valid and up to date Safer Recruitment in Education training.
- 9.5. The Quay is committed to supporting the statutory guidance from the Department for Education on the application of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018 and related obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 (Applicable only to nursery, primary and childcare for children up to the age of 8)
- 9.6 Should we commission services from other organisations, we would ensure that compliance with our policy and procedures is a contractual requirement.
- 9.7. We advise all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children that could be a transferable risk to their role.

10. SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

(See also: Appendix A1.1 Abuse Definitions, and A1.4 Further Information on Specific Safeguarding Issues)

Some of the specific safeguarding issues faced by children and young people are outlined below. Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 contains additional information about these and other specific safeguarding issues – children and the court system, children missing from education, children with family members in prison, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation: county lines, domestic abuse, homelessness, so-called ‘honour-based’ violence and sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges.

10.1 Child on Child Abuse and sexual violence/ sexual harassment

We believe that all children have a right to learn in a safe environment. Children and young people should be free from harm by adults in the school and other pupils or peers. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or dismissed as ‘banter’, ‘just having a laugh’ or ‘part of growing up’, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children and young people. All child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously, regardless of gender of the alleged perpetrator(s) and alleged victim(s).

We recognise that some learners will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others, however in most instances, the conduct of pupils and young people towards each other will be covered by The Quay's Promoting Positive Behaviour policy. However, some allegations might be of such a serious nature that they become safeguarding concerns. These allegations are most likely to include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation; however, we are aware that the abuse may take any form, including the use of technology.

Definition

- The definition for domestic abuse (Home Office 2013) relates to young people aged 16 and 17 who experience physical, emotional, sexual and/or financial abuse, and coercive control, in their intimate relationships;
- The definition for child sexual exploitation (DfE 2017) includes all children and young people under the age of 18 who are sexually abused in the context of exploitative relationships, contexts and situations by a person of any age – including another child and/or young person;
- The definition for young people who display harmful sexual behaviour refers to any young person, under the age of 18, who engages in “sexual discussions or acts that are inappropriate for their age or stage of development” (Rich, 2011). Children and young people can also engage in harmful sexual behaviour online or through the use of technology e.g. grooming, exposing others to extreme/illegal pornography, sexual images and/or chat (Belton and Hollis, 2016);
- Serious youth violence is defined with reference to offences (as opposed to relationships/contexts) such as violence against the person, sexual offences, robbery or gun or knife crime (Metropolitan Police, 2016)

The safeguarding implications of sexual activity between young people

The intervention of child protection agencies in situations involving sexual activity between children and young people can require professional judgments. Some situations are statutorily clear – for example, a child under the age of 13 cannot consent to sexual activity. But it will not necessarily be appropriate to initiate safeguarding procedures where sexual activity involving children and young people below the age of legal consent (16 years) comes to notice. In our society generally the age at which children and young people become sexually active has steadily dropped. It is important to distinguish between consensual sexual activity between children and young people of a similar age (where at least one is below the age of consent), and sexual activity involving a power imbalance, or some form of coercion or exploitation

Prevention

At The Quay we will minimise the risk of allegations against other pupils and young people by:

- Providing PHSE as part of the curriculum, which will help pupils and young people develop their understanding of acceptable behaviours, healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe;
- Having effective systems within our provision for pupils and young people to be able to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, supported and valued, and that the issues they raise will be looked into and addressed;
- Being aware of and challenging inappropriate language used by pupils and young people e.g. terms such as describing something as 'gay' can have a lasting impact on the self-esteem of those pupils and young people who may be struggling with or confused about their sexual identity;
- Liaising and working with other professionals to develop robust risk assessments for pupils and young people that are identified as posing a potential risk to other pupils and young people; and
- Liaising with specialists to deliver appropriate targeted work to pupils and young people identified as being at potential risk e.g. protective behaviours work.

10.2 Radicalisation

To fulfil the Prevent Duty, it is essential that staff are able to identify children and young people who may be vulnerable to radicalisation as part of our safeguarding duties. The statutory guidance makes clear that schools are expected to assess the risk of children and young people being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children and young people who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them.

The general risks affecting children and young people may vary from area to area, and according to their age. Schools and related educational settings are in an important position to identify risks within a given local context. It is important that provisions understand these risks so that they can respond in an appropriate and proportionate way. At the same time schools should be aware of the increased risk of online radicalisation, as terrorist organisations may and do seek to radicalise children and young people through the use of social media and the internet.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children and young people's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Children and young people at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views. Quay staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children and young people who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately.

Even very young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others, whether in the family or outside, and display concerning behaviour. The Prevent Duty does not require tutors or mentors to carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life but as with any other safeguarding risk, they must take action when they observe behaviour of concern.

The safeguarding procedures outlined above need to be followed in exactly the same way should staff have a concern about potential radicalisation or undue influences (see Appendix 1.4 for further details) .

10.3 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child abuse which involves children and young people receiving something in exchange for sexual activity. Perpetrators of CSE are found in rural as well as urban areas and are not restricted to particular ethnic groups. It is important that staff are aware of the risk factors and alert the DSL if there are concerns.

Key indicators of children and young people being sexually exploited can include:

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late;
- Regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education;
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections;
- Mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing;
- Drug and alcohol misuse; and
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

Practitioners should also be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual exploitation may not recognise themselves as such but they should still be regarded as victims. (see Appendix 1.4 for further details).

10.4 Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable young people

County lines is a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and missing persons; and the response to tackle it involves the police, the National Crime Agency, a wide

range of Government departments, local government agencies and VCS (voluntary and community sector) organisations. The UK Government defines county lines as: a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. County lines activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities.

Child criminal exploitation is used to describe this type of exploitation where children are involved, and is defined as: occurring where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines however, and includes for instance children and young people forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.

Key indicators of children and young people being criminally exploited can include:

- persistently going missing from school or home and / or being found out-of-area;
- unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones
- excessive receipt of texts / phone calls and/or having multiple handsets
- relationships with controlling / older individuals or groups
- leaving home / care without explanation
- suspicion of physical assault / unexplained injuries
- parental concerns
- carrying weapons
- significant decline in school results / performance
- gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
- self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Practitioners should also be aware that many children and young people who are victims of criminal exploitation may not recognise themselves as such but they should still be regarded as victims. (see Appendix 1.4 for further details).

10.5 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and the Mandatory Reporting Duty

As all staff should be vigilant to the indicators of child sexual exploitation - the same is relevant for FGM. The definition of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)¹ is as follows:

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but there is no medical reason for this to be done.

Section 5B of the 2003 FGM Act introduced a mandatory duty which requires educational professionals in England and Wales to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either:

- Are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her;
- Observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

Further information about making a report to the police can be found in the FGM Mandatory Reporting Procedures. The DSL must be kept notified of any reports of alleged/ abuse, concerns and calls made to the police. Recordings of alleged abuse/concerns and any subsequent conversations must be logged and given to the DSL as with any other safeguarding/child protection issue.

10.6 Child/ Youth Mental Health & Safeguarding

Due to the profile of need of our pupils, all staff are acutely aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child or young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

- Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children and young people day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- Some staff are trained as Youth/Mental Health First Aiders whilst others receive mental health awareness training.
- Where children and young people have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is therefore key that staff have awareness of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- If staff have a mental health concern about a child or young person that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action will be taken, in accordance with the child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputies.
- The DoF has published advice and guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, and also Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools.

- In addition, Public Health England (PHE) has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people including its guidance Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing. PHE resources include social media, forming positive relationships, smoking and alcohol.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1

A 1.1 Abuse Definitions and Further Information on Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

PHYSICAL ABUSE

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs & Indicators

a) Bruising

Should always be considered in the context of the age and developmental level of the child. Most falls or accidents produce one bruise on a single surface, usually a bang protuberance. Bruising in accidents is usually on the front of the body as children generally fall forwards.

b) Bites

These may leave clear impressions of teeth. Human bites are oval or crescent shaped. It can be difficult to distinguish the bite of an adult from that of a child over four years.

c) Burns and scalds

Redness, rawness and blistering of skin can be caused by burns or scalds.

A child getting into water that is too hot of his/her own accord will struggle to get out again and there will be splash marks. Small round burns may be cigarette burns (but may be friction burns and accidental if along the bony protuberances of the spine).

d) Scars

Children may have scars, but notice should be taken of:

- An exceptionally large number of scars of differing ages, especially if coupled with current bruising.
- Scars of unusual shape, e.g. round, from possible cigarette burns.
- Large scars from burns or lacerations that did not receive medical attention.

e) Fractures

These should be suspected if there is pain, swelling or discolouration over a bone or joint, or if a child is reluctant to use a limb. The most common non-accidental fractures are to the long bones, i.e. arms and legs, and to the ribs.

a. Skull fractures should always be suspected if there is bruising to the head of a young child, and paediatric advice should be sought. Unusual drowsiness fits of vomiting may indicate intracranial injury.

b. A skeletal survey examination looking for old or unrecognised fractures should always be considered and discussed with a senior doctor in the investigation of suspected abuse, particularly involving young children.

f) Injuries to the genital or rectal area

Any reported injuries, discharge or discomfort of the genital or rectal area should be taken seriously and referred for medical examination. Non-medical staff should not, under any circumstances, undertake such an examination themselves.

g) Poisoning

Poisoning of children may give rise to recurrent episodes of illness and sickness including vomiting, diarrhea, high temperature, skin rashes, paralysis, etc.

h) Internal injuries (abdomen, intracranial, chest)

Violent shaking or physical abuse can cause hemorrhages or can rupture internal organs. There may be little evidence of external injury but the child may appear shocked, with pallor, sweating and a weak pulse. Expert advice must be sought in any case of suspected non-accidental injury. If a member of staff does have reason to suspect non-accidental injury, the pupil should be taken to Minor Injuries to be checked by a doctor, and safeguarding procedures are followed as usual. The injury should be noted and recorded in full in the relevant reporting forms i.e. injury form, body map, etc.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of

emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Signs and Indicators

- Excessively clingy or attention-seeking behaviour
- Increased challenging behaviour
- Any negative changes in behaviour
- Withdrawal
- Low esteem
- Apathy
- Constantly seeking to please
- Over familiarity
- Decreased concentration
- Decreased school performance and attendance
- Lack of appetite
- Weight loss/gain
- Increased sleep disturbance
- Onset of wetting or soiling
- Unusual behaviours
- Anxiety and fear

SEXUAL ABUSE

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include noncontact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

Signs and Indicators

Sexual abuse often presents in a disguised way. Although some children have obvious genital injuries, a sexually transmitted disease or are pregnant, relatively few

show such clear signs. Recognition of sexual abuse generally follows either a direct statement from the child (or very occasionally from the abuser), or suspicion based on the child's circumstances, behaviour or physical symptoms or signs.

The following indicators should alert professionals to the possibility of sexual abuse. Suspicion increases when several features are present together.

Physical Manifestations:

- a. Vaginal bleeding in pre-pubescent girls.
- b. Genital lacerations or bruising.
- c. Sexually transmitted diseases.
- d. Abnormal dilation of the vagina, urethra or anus
- e. Pregnancy, especially in younger girls

In a number of cases sexual abuse may come to light during the investigation of bruising or other physical injury.

Emotional and behavioural manifestations:

- a. Frequent sexual references and 'over-sexualised' in talk, play or in drawings
- b. Sexually inappropriate behaviour towards adults or children
- c. Hinting at sexual activity or secrets through words or play
- d. Excessive awareness or knowledge of sexual matters inappropriate to age and development of child.

Other indicators that may be associated with sexual abuse:

- a. Running away from home
- b. Suicide attempts and self-mutilation.

As well as all the Signs and indicators listed under Emotional Abuse.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse – please see our CSE policy statement for further information including possible signs and indicators.

NEGLECT

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs and Indicators

a) General Health. Poor growth in height and weight can be important signs of neglect, and all such children need medical assessment. Significant indicators are:

- Steals food or voracious when offered food or has an eating disorder due to food deprivation
- An unresponsive child with poor growth due to food deprivation or inadequate diet
- General vitamin/mineral deficiencies affecting milestones, bone growth, concentration and leading to minor to significant diseases like Rickets, etc.
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses

b) Physical Appearance

- Inadequate clothing and footwear (size and weather)
- Poor general hygiene
- Lack of intimate care which may lead to rashes and sores

c) Emotional signs (See Emotional Abuse).

General Points

Some signs and symptoms of physical or sexual abuse may seem insignificant in themselves, but repeated injuries, even of a minor nature, may be symptomatic of more serious abuse.

When considering an explanation for any injury which has occurred, attention should be given to:

- a. The feasibility of the explanation
- b. Whether it is appropriate to the child's age and developmental level.
- c. Whether it was dealt with suitably and promptly.

NB. Always pay attention to the pupil's account of the injury if appropriate and record this accurately. Do not use your own interpretation of what the child has said.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams. Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

A 1.2 Key Legislative Summaries

- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children

- Section 5B (11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children and young people
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). The Act allows our provision to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting learners (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled learners. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children

A 1.3 The Three Safeguarding Partners

The following 3 safeguarding partners are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work

together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA)
- A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

A 1.4 Further Information on Specific Safeguarding Issues

This information is based on the advice in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. Annex B also includes information on further issues to be aware of, including children's involvement in the court system, children with family members in prison, child criminal exploitation, and domestic abuse.

Children missing from education

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children and young people who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child/ young person's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child or young person is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child/ young person is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

(Child-on-Child Abuse) Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
 - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
 - sexualised online bullying;
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats; and
 - upskirting (upskirting typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence).

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse that occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

This can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, but does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam.

Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Indicators of sexual exploitation can include a child/ young person:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and/or alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time, or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education, or not taking part in education

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child or young person's welfare. The DSL and deputies will be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

Where a child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children's social care.

County Lines & Modern Slavery

How does County Lines affect children and vulnerable young people? Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;

- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation.

Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. One of the key factors found in most cases of county lines exploitation is the presence of some form of exchange (e.g. carrying drugs in return for something). Where it is the victim who is offered, promised or given something they need or want, the exchange can include both tangible (such as money, drugs or clothes) and intangible rewards (such as status, protection or perceived friendship or affection). It is important to remember the unequal power dynamic within which this exchange occurs and to remember that the receipt of something by a young person or vulnerable adult does not make them any less of a victim.

It is also important to note that the prevention of something negative can also fulfil the requirement for exchange, for example a young person who engages in county lines activity to stop someone carrying out a threat to harm his/her family.

The national picture on county lines continues to develop but there are recorded cases of:

- children as young as 12 years old being exploited or moved by gangs to courier drugs out of their local area; 15-16 years is the most common age range
- both males and females being exploited
- White British children being targeted because gangs perceive they are more likely to evade police detection but a person of any ethnicity or nationality may be exploited
- the use of social media to make initial contact with children and young people
- Class A drug users being targeted so that gangs can takeover their homes (known as 'cuckooing'). Within the UK, county lines exploitation is widespread, with gangs from big cities including London, Manchester and Liverpool operating throughout England, Wales and Scotland. Gangs are known to target vulnerable children and adults; some of the factors that heighten a person's vulnerability include:
 - having prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse
 - lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic violence or parental

substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example)

- social isolation or social difficulties
- economic vulnerability
- homelessness or insecure accommodation status • connections with other people involved in gangs
- having a physical or learning disability
- having mental health or substance misuse issues;
- being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories)
- being excluded from mainstream education, in particular attending a Pupil Referral Unit.

Use local safeguarding process to share concerns, the first step of which is to contact the DSL/ Deputy DSL's within the provision who will make a referral to social care. If you are aware that a potential victim may have come from / travelled to another area as part of their involvement in county lines, you should include this information in your referral to enable liaison between safeguarding agencies in the different areas.

If you are worried that a vulnerable person is at immediate risk of harm you should also contact the police: your local public protection officer or, in the case of a child, local children's protection officer. If you are a designated First Responder for the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), you should also consider referring any young person or adult you suspect of being a potential victim of trafficking or modern slavery to the NRM. Any referral should be after appropriate safeguarding steps have been taken and in light of multi-agency discussions. Further information and guidance on county lines exploitation can be found from The Children's Society.

So-called 'honour-based' violence (including FGM and forced marriage)

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. All forms of HBV are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child or young person being at risk of HBV or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

FGM

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children and young people affected by FGM or at risk of FGM. Section 7.4 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers

that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil or young person confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil/ young person already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
 - o Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
 - o Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
 - o Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
 - o Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
 - o Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
 - o Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
 - o Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
 - o Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
 - o Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
 - o Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to

social care in relation to other safeguarding issues

- A girl:
 - o Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
 - o Having limited level of integration within UK society
 - o Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"

- o Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
- o Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- o Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children or young people about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
- o Being unexpectedly absent from school
- o Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication.

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. Staff will be made aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them. If a member of staff suspects that a pupil or young person is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil/ young person about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil/ young person about the concerns in a secure and private place
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fm@fco.gov.uk
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate

Preventing radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Schools have a duty to prevent children and young people from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate

training to equip them to identify children and young people at risk. We will assess the risk of children and young people in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place, and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period. Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website Educate Against Hate and charity NSPCC say that signs that a pupil or young person is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Children and young people who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong. If staff are concerned about a pupil/young person, they will follow our procedures set out in section 7.2 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL. Staff should always take action if they are worried.

Appendix 2

A2.0 Safer Recruitment and DBS Checks – policy and procedures

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

New staff: when appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent
- Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought. We will ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these (including carry out checks online) and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested will ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children and young people.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children/ young people; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children/ young people; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

Existing staff:

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children/ young people, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
- The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- The 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child/ young person or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff:

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors:

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, *who is to work at the provision when learners are present* has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at The Quay.

For self-employed contractors such as therapists, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Adults who supervise learners on work experience:

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children and young people from harm. We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a learner under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

A2.1 Responding to Concerns and Reports of Alleged Abuse

Members of staff need to be aware how to respond and what to say when a child/young person discloses abuse. Some possibilities are:

“I’m taking what you say very seriously” (better than “I believe you”)

“I’m glad you told me- you’re right to tell, it’s okay to tell”

“I’m sorry that it happened. It’s not your fault”

“I care and, if I have any worries about your safety I’ll get others to help you”

Let the child or young person know what you are going to do in a way that is appropriate to their level of understanding and tell them what is likely to happen next. Always finish on a positive note, praise the child or young person for telling - try not to leave the child or young person alone, offer if possible to talk again later. No members of staff should interrogate or attempt to investigate. Rather encourage the child or young person to say what they wish until enough information is gained to decide whether or not referral is appropriate. Even if this is not the case the conversation should be recorded. In order to gain the correct information from a child or young person raising a concern, members of staff must ensure that any questions asked are open. Do not interrogate but employ open questions.

Only ask enough questions to gain very basic information - it will become someone else’s task to take this further. Take allegations seriously and support - DO NOT interrogate!

Ask WHEN: e.g. “When did it happen?” NOT “Did it happen last night?”

Ask WHERE: e.g. “Where did it happen?” NOT “Did he/she come into your bedroom?”

Ask WHO: e.g. “Who did it?” NOT “Was it daddy/babysitter/John?”

Ask WHAT: e.g. “What happened?” NOT “Did such and such happen?”

Avoid HOW and WHY questions - these require a judgement by the child or young person and may also induce self-recrimination.

A2.2 Referrals

Assuming that the safeguarding concern does not relate to a learner on role at a local school (in which case it falls to the school to lead the safeguarding procedures):

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children’s social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so. If you make a referral directly, you must tell the DSL as soon as possible. The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child or young person’s situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child or young person’s situation improves.

A2.3 Code of Good Practice For Staff

All Things SEN has adopted the national Guidance for Safe Working Practice (Safer Recruitment

Consortium / DfE / NASS 2015) – see

<http://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Oct%202015.pdf>

All staff are provided with information at induction and refresher training on safe conduct and expected standards of behaviour.

Key points given in training:

Ensure any physical contact between a staff member and a child or young person is a considered action, necessary and for the purposes of instruction or immediate care.

Avoid where possible being alone with a child or young person. Where circumstances make this unavoidable try to ensure that others are within earshot and preferably within vision.

Never make salacious, suggestive or demeaning remarks/gestures to/or in the presence of children and young people.

Share your concerns with a senior colleague if you suspect that a child or young person is becoming inappropriately attracted to you.

Seek advice and support in circumstances where your relationship with, or feelings towards, a child or young person are placing you at risk of unprofessional behaviour. You are urged to seek advice and support from a senior colleague or management.

From time to time personal circumstances arise which can adversely affect your professional relationships (e.g. bereavement, health or relationship breakdown). Should this be the case you are encouraged to seek advice and support from a senior colleague

Avoid any physical horseplay (e.g. wrestling or tickling) which any child, or young person, or staff, as visitors might misinterpret the situation, no matter how innocent or well-intentioned your actions might be.

Always respect a child's or young person's right to privacy.

The use of restrictive physical intervention on a child must involve only the absolute minimum force

necessary and is permissible only when you are certain that the child is at imminent risk of endangering themselves, yourself, others, or causing or about to serious damage to property. Where possible summon a colleague to witness the situation and give you appropriate help. (Follow guidance given in Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy)

Always be fully informed of the School's policy and procedures for child protection.

A2.4 Allegations of Abuse Made Against Staff

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child/ young person, or may have harmed a child/ young person, or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/ young person, or
- Behaved towards a child/ young person or children/ young people in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children or young people.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

It applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place on site. We will deal with any allegation of abuse against a member of staff very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Suspension

Suspension will not be the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child/ young person or other children/ young people is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the provision so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child/young person or children/ young people concerned
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children/ young people
- Redeploying the Individual to alternative work in the provision so that they do not have unsupervised access to children and young people
- Moving the child/ young person or children/ young people to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role.

(Please refer to appendix of disciplinary procedure on more information on suspension)

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the Safeguarding Lead and Joint Director will take the following steps:

- Immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police before consulting the designated officer – for

example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)

- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the local authority designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the provision and their contact details
- If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the local authority designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the local authority designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in the provision and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate. This could include a senior colleague or a trade union representative, or a staff member trained in providing counselling services.
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children/ young person involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice

- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children/ young person involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child/ young person, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child/ young person

If the provision is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from working with children.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the Directors will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the Provision, such as a supply teacher or contracted staff member provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

- We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome
- The governing board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation
- We will involve the agency fully, but the Provision will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required
- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week

- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution: The DSL will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the Provision ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the Joint will discuss whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of tutoring staff, the Joint Directors will discuss whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the Joint Directors will consider how best to facilitate this.

The Directors will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending All Things SEN

Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the Joint Directors will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the learner who made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate, even if they are not a learner.

Confidentiality and information sharing

The Provision will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the local authority's designated officer, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children/ young person involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality

- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping

The DSL will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above)

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file, and provide a copy to the individual.

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for any Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.

References

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are substantiated, we will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the Provision's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified

- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

A2.5 Reporting & Responding to Low-Level Concerns

As part of encouraging an open and transparent culture within the provision, all concerns are encouraged to be shared be that for or on behalf of children and young people, staff and others. These concerns may not necessarily meet the harm threshold; however, they may be indicators towards worrying behaviour or conduct where appropriate action to safeguard children, young people and others is needed. Proactive reporting enables ATS to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early, whilst minimizing risk of abuse. Safeguarding reports are completed on the Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form which is located on Microsoft 365 'Forms'.

What is a “low-level” concern?

A low-level concern is any concern- no matter how small-even if no more than causing a sense of unease or “nagging doubt”.

Worries or Concerns related to Staff/Adults

In the case of low- level concerns related to adults and staff this could include:

- conduct that is inconsistent with the school’s staff code of conduct- including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- does not meet the harm-threshold or is not otherwise serious enough to consider a referral to LADO

Proactive reporting ensures that staff working on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries according to the ethos and values of All Things SEN.

Low level concerns can arise from a number of sources and such as suspicion, complaint, or disclosures from a learner, parent or other adult in the school provision. It can also arise outside of the provision or as a result of safer recruitment vetting checks carried out by the school.

Staff are trained to report all concerns related to practice or conduct using the concern reporting procedures (see A2.6 for details). These can then be recorded on The Quay’s recording platform (Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form in Microsoft ‘Forms’) or alternatively, concerns can also be submitted via e-mail to dean@allthingssen.co.uk marked ‘safeguarding’.

Where the concern relates to the DSL or joint Director, it should be addressed to the LADO directly.

These concerns will be treated seriously and investigated accordingly, gathering additional information as necessary with an outcome provided and actions taken in accordance with the Provision’s performance, capability or disciplinary processes.

Reporting Worries or Concerns Anonymously

Where a person feels unable to report a worry or concern directly, this can be reported anonymously. If the concerns are related to staff working with children and young people, this can be shared in written form addressed to the DSL.

Worries or Concerns related to Children & Young People

Where there are worries or concerns related to the behaviour or conduct of children and young people, these are actively encouraged to be shared with the DSL using the concern reporting procedures for staff (see A2.6 for details) or for pupils. For learners sharing worries/concerns, these can be reported directly to the DSL or a trusted adult; these will then be recorded on the Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form in Microsoft 365, which automatically alerts both Joint Directors to a new safeguarding concern.

These concerns will be reviewed by the DSL with assistance of key staff and updates/ outcome provided to those who have reported the concern. Additional professional advice and support via the placing authority may be initiated and adaptations of the support in the provision considered to help address the behaviours whilst ensuring the safety of peers and others. If a learner is registered at a school, the procedure is to work via their DSL, if this person isn't contactable within a timescale proportionate to the risk, then the ATS DSL will contact the local authority directly.

Gloucestershire County Council Contact information

To report a concern if you work with children or young people - Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub:

During office hours - You can call Children and Families Front Door Service on 01452 426565 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm).

Out of office hours - If the issue cannot safely wait until the next working day, contact the Emergency Duty Team on 01452 614758 and provide them with as much information as possible.

Bristol County Council- Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership

First Response Team on 0117 903 6444. When the offices are closed call the Emergency Duty Team on 01454 615 165. If ATS have any concerns in relation to a vulnerable adult or the professional works with adults, the DSL will contact Care Direct on 0117 922 2700.

LADO@bristol.gov.uk